



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/912,511	07/26/2001	Chung-Wang Lee	LEEC3046/EM/7041	6293

23364 7590 06/13/2005

BACON & THOMAS, PLLC
625 SLATERS LANE
FOURTH FLOOR
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

EXAMINER

POLLACK, MELVIN H

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

2145

DATE MAILED: 06/13/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/912,511

Applicant(s)

LEE ET AL.

Examiner

Melvin H. Pollack

Art Unit

2145

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 February 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☐ Claim(s) 1 and 4-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 4-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 26 July 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☒ Other: see attached office action.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments filed 18 February 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. A discussion of the arguments is provided below.
2. The applicant has added the limitations of claims 2 and 3 to claim 1, and then cancelled claims 2 and 3. This changes the scope of claims 4-12.
3. The applicant claims that Saito does not expressly disclose a central controller, and instead discloses a control device for multiple networks (P. 7, lines 13-14). Saito teaches a control device (Fig. 7, #205 & 210) that controls the devices on a particular LAN (Fig. 7, #208-214), and is the central controller for this LAN network. The fact that it may connect and communicate with another central controller (Fig. 7, #204 and #206) over a network (Fig. 7, #202), said controller being the central controller of a separate LAN for devices (Fig. 7, #206 and 207) does not detract from the centrality of the controller for a particular LAN. Further, the purpose of the connection is to allow a device on LAN 1 to operate and interact with a device on LAN 2 (Fig. 18-22), by going through the two central controllers and through no other path. Thus, the connection devices fulfill the purpose of centrality.
4. Applicant claims that Saito does not expressly disclose a wireless network (P. 7, lines 15-16). The examiner had stated that in the action, and therefore combined Saito with the wireless "antenna network system" of Thomas.
5. In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., "PINs of the type claimed (P. 7, lines 21-22)") are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims

Art Unit: 2145

are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993). The examiner reads PIN broadly to be an identifier of any type, provided it refer to one and only one device, i.e. an IP address or 1394 address/reference. To gain a more specific form of PIN, the claims must be amended, and it must be shown that usage of the specific PIN is patentably distinct from using any generic PIN or other identifier.

6. The applicant claims that Saito does not expressly disclose PIN registration. Fig. 19 shows a registration of device identifiers, better illustrated in Fig. 15, in which device identifiers are associated with attribute information of the device corresponding to the identifiers (Fig. 16), so that a second device may be made aware of the identity and location of the device corresponding to the identifier, and therefore interact (Fig. 18). If the identifiers of Saito devices were not registered, Saito could not operate as taught.

7. For the reasons above, the claims remain rejected, and therefore made final.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Saito et al. (6,523,696) in view of Thomas (6,498,939).

Art Unit: 2145

10. For claim 1, Saito teaches (abstract) an information home appliance system (col. 1, line 10 – col. 9, line 30) comprising at least one information home appliance (Fig. 7, #208-213); and a center controller (Fig. 7, #205) connected to a network (Fig. 7, #202),

Wherein, when started, said center controller:

- a. Automatically receives and detects output signal of each of said at least one information home appliance (Fig. 9), and then registers the connection of said at least one information home appliance to said network (col. 21, line 1 – col. 22, line 50);
- b. Judges if the signal received came from a new information home appliance or not (Fig. 46, #S5102);
- c. Registers the new information home appliance (Figs. 15-19) by recognizing a PIN (personal identification number) code (Figs. 15 and 16) of the information home appliance in a memory thereof for further recognition use (Fig. 19) if the information home appliance under detection is newly installed (col. 23, line 25 – col. 28, line 35); and then returns to step (a) (Figs. 45 – 50); and
- d. Inquires about the condition of every said registered information home appliance (col. 21, line 1 – col. 22, line 50), and then returns to step (a);

Wherein when a packet message is received from said network (Fig. 13), said center controller immediately sends the packet message to each of said at least one information home appliance by broadcast (col. 22, line 50 – col. 23, line 25); and

Wherein upon receipt of a packet message signal from said center controller, the communications circuit of each of said at least one information home appliance demodulates the

Art Unit: 2145

packet message signal, judges if the signal matches or not, and then proceeds with the required control processing subject to the control instruction of the packet message signal if the signal matches (Fig. 22).

11. Saito does not expressly disclose that the system is wireless, and that the at least one information home appliance and center controller each comprise a wireless I/O (input/output) circuit. Thomas teaches a system (abstract) of a wireless home appliance system (col. 1, line 1 – col. 6, line 67) in which the home appliance and central server communicate wirelessly (Fig. 1). At the time the invention was made, one of ordinary skill in the art would have used Thomas to develop a method for replacing Saito's wired connections with wireless antennas in order to set up a home network without the need of complicated and/or unsightly cable networks (col. 1, line 3 – col. 1, line 40).

12. Saito does not expressly disclose that if the information home appliance under detection is not a new one, said center controller keeps inquiring the current condition of every registered information home appliance, and then judging if said at least one information home appliance has reacted to the inquiry by sending out a response signal, and then records the PIN code of the information home appliance having no reaction so as not to make any further inquiry if the inquired information home appliance has no reaction, and then returns to step (a). Thomas teaches these limitations (col. 5, lines 35-55; col. 6, lines 15-40). At the time the invention was made, one of ordinary skill in the art would have added periodic checks to Saito in order to handle problems with a device, such as communications system degradation (col. 6, line 34).

13. For claim 4, Saito teaches that at least one information home appliance each further comprises a control circuit adapted to control every component part of the respective information

Art Unit: 2145

home appliance (Figs. 20-21), and an interface connected to the respective communication circuit for receiving and transmitting a signal through the respective wireless I/O circuit (Fig. 22). Saito does not expressly disclose that the communications circuit is a wireless I/O circuit. Thomas teaches this limitation (col. 4, line 60 – col. 5, line 3). At the time the invention was made, one of ordinary skill in the art would have used Thomas in order to set up a home network without the need of complicated and/or unsightly cable networks (col. 1, line 3 – col. 1, line 40).

14. For claim 5, Saito does not expressly disclose the configuration of the wireless I/O circuit. Thomas teaches that the wireless I/O circuit of each of said at least one information home appliance (Fig. 2) comprises:

- a. A wireless transmitter-receiver module (Fig. 2, #58); and
- b. A CPU (central processing unit) (Fig. 2, #10) connected to the wireless transmitter-receiver module of the respective wireless I/O circuit (Fig. 2, #404) and the interface of the respective information home appliance respectively (Fig. 2, #506 and #508) and
 - i. Adapted to receive a signal from the control circuit of the respective information home appliance and transmit the received signal to the wireless transmitter-receiver module of the respective wireless I/O circuit for transmission to said central controller (col. 7, line 60 – col. 8, line 17); and
 - ii. To transmit a control signal received by the wireless transmitter-receiver module of the respective wireless I/O circuit through the respective interface to the control circuit of the respective information home appliance to drive the

control circuit to control the component parts of the respective information home appliance (col. 8, lines 17-25).

15. At the time the invention was made, one of ordinary skill in the art would have used Thomas in order to set up a home network without the need of complicated and/or unsightly cable networks (col. 1, line 3 – col. 1, line 40).

16. For claim 6, Saito teaches that said center controller further comprises a network interface connected to said network (Fig. 8, #223) for receiving the packet message signal from a remote side at said network and transmitting a signal to electronic apparatus means at a remote side of said network (col. 19, line 40 – col. 20, line 67).

17. Claim 7 is drawn to the limitations in claim 5, but for the central controller comprising the wireless transmitter-receiver module, which Thomas also teaches (Fig. 1, #3). Therefore, since claim 5 is rejected, claim 7 is also rejected for the reasons above.

18. For claim 8, Saito teaches that the CPU of the communications circuit of one of said at least one information home appliance recognizes a received signal that is not for controlling the respective information home appliance, the CPU of the communications circuit of the respective information home appliance gives up the packet message (Fig. 23, #228).

19. Claims 9-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Saito and Thomas as applied to claims 1, 5, 7 above, and further in view of Plasson et al. (6,795,688).

20. For claims 9 and 10, Saito and Thomas do not expressly disclose that the wireless transmitter-receiver module is an infrared transmitter-receiver module. Plasson teaches this limitation (col. 1, line 35). At the time the invention was made, one of ordinary skill in the art

Art Unit: 2145

would have used the wireless technology in order to support the interaction, collaboration, and cooperation among the member devices (col. 1, lines 30-35).

21. For claims 11 and 12, Saito and Thomas do not expressly disclose that the wireless transmitter-receiver module is constructed subject to bluetooth communication protocol. Plasson teaches this limitation (col. 1, line 35). At the time the invention was made, one of ordinary skill in the art would have used the wireless technology in order to support the interaction, collaboration, and cooperation among the member devices (col. 1, lines 30-35).

Conclusion

22. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Melvin H. Pollack whose telephone number is (571) 272-3887. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00-4:30 M-F.

Art Unit: 2145

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Valencia Martin-Wallace can be reached on (571) 272-6159. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

MHP
03 June 2005


VALENCIA MARTIN-WALLACE
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER